

Wycombe shine in Cup encounter at home to Tooting

Sports Mail Special Report

WYCOMBE WANDS. 2 : TOOTING & M. ... 1

THRILLING exchanges at top speed kept a big crowd at Wycombe on their toes in Wycombe Wanderers FA Cup (4th qualifying round) clash with Tooting and Mitcham and, with the Wycombe attack showing vastly-improved form, Tooting, who were lucky not to be several goals down in the first half an hour, were beaten 2-1.

Wycombe: Brown; D. Worley, Atkins; Thomas, Fisher, Beck; Bates, L. Worley, P. Bressington, Holmes, Hyde.

Tooting: Pearson; Firman, Iorwerth; Slade, Bennett, Gradi; Roberts, Nicholls, Clay, Hasty, Flanagan.

Wycombe, who fielded a new centre forward and inside left, both of whom showed good form, took the initiative from the start. In the first few minutes one of the newcomers, Jimmie Holmes, was checked by Wally Pearson after taking a pass from Bates just in front of goal.

Then Pearson ran out to stop another dangerous raid by the Wycombe left winger Steve Hyde.

Nine minutes after the start Wycombe were awarded an indirect free kick for obstruction in the penalty area.

Atkins' powerful kick knocked out the Tooting right half Slade in the goalmouth, and when the ball rebounded BATES put Wycombe ahead.

As Tooting hit back at top speed their centre-forward Clay was injured in a collision with the Wycombe goalkeeper but was able to resume after attention.

HARD PRESSURE

Wycombe almost scored again when, with Pearson out of his goal, Firman stopped a shot from Bressington with his knees on the goal line.

Then Pearson again rescued hard-pressed Tooting by taking the ball from the feet of Bressington in another top speed assault.

The speed and slick combination of the home forwards often had the Tooting defence at a loss and only the gallant Pearson, repeatedly in action, saved them on many occasions.

Wycombe maintained their improved form in the second half and Bates, in a new role on the right wing, initiated some promising advances which spreadeagled the Tooting defence.

Hasty played hard to get the Tooting attack going but the home defence, too, was in excellent form.

As Tooting began to hit back, showing greater cohesion in attack, Clay almost found the mark from a pass by Roberts, the shot being blocked on the goal line.

Although they were having rather less of the play than in the first half, Wycombe, well served by the constructive work of their wing halves, always looked dangerous in their advances and Pearson did well to stop shots by Holmes and Bressington, whose inclusion added punch to the front line.

In the last 20 minutes Wycombe again stepped up the pace and after a sweeping combined attack on the left wing BRESSINGTON took a pass from Holmes to score a second for Wycombe with a brilliant long range shot.

As Tooting hit back again ROBERTS found the mark for them with a spectacular long range shot five minutes before the end.

RESULT

WYCOMBE WANDERERS 2
TOOTING & MITCHAM ... 1

NEW MEN LIVEN UP WYCOMBE

Wycombe 2 Tooting and M 1

IN the most exciting game at Loakes Park this season Wycombe showed a zeal and sparkle which delighted their own followers and had the Isthmian League champions defending desperately for long periods.

Much of Wycombe's vastly improved form stemmed from the inclusion of two new forwards, Welshman Sheldon Bressington, a 25-year-old policeman, who led the attack, and Scotsman Jimmy Holmes at inside left.

These two added punch and pace to the forward line, which moved with a precision and understanding not seen before this season.

With sound constructive work by wing halves Thomas and Beck and improvements too in defence, Wycombe kept the initiative for much of this F.A. Cup fourth qualifying round.

Tooting's hero was goalkeeper Wally Pearson. Repeatedly in action, he alone kept the score down to 1-0 at half time, after Bates had put Wycombe ahead in the ninth minute.

When Wycombe were awarded an indirect free kick in the penalty area, Atkins's shot knocked out right half Slade on the goal line and Bates scored from the rebound.

Paddy Hasty, working tirelessly in defence and attack, tried hard to get Tooting's forwards in action in the second half, but apart from flashes of brilliance by Clay and Flanagan the forwards were out-paced by the Wanderers, who increased their lead in the 70th minute when Bressington beat Pearson after smart work by Holmes.

But Tooting were still fighting desperately in a furious finish in which both goalkeepers were brought into action.

Five minutes before the end, outside right David Roberts caught the home defence napping for the first time with a spectacular long-range goal.